

Rules tries to be as fair as they can. I would presume that the committee will be inclined to follow historic practice for the consideration of the budget next week.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I respectfully inform the majority leader, we were very concerned about the fact that we were shut down today in terms of offering amendments or substitutes. I will respectfully advise the majority that if that continues to occur, there will be actions on our side of the aisle to try to express our deep concern about that.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HOYER. I yield to the gentleman from California.

Mr. DREIER. Mr. Speaker, I simply will say as the distinguished majority leader has said, I actually made the announcement just a few minutes ago about the request that we have proposals submitted to the Committee on Rules by early next week so we will be able to consider this measure on Wednesday. It is our intention, as has been our intention in the past, to do everything we possibly can to make substitutes in order and as many substitutes as we possibly can.

I want to assure the gentleman that is the goal of the Committee on Rules, and we will look forward to testimony from our many colleagues who would like to offer proposals.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I thank the gentleman and express the fervent hope that the committee will be able to reach its goals. They are commendable goals to achieve, and I hope they are achieved.

Mr. Speaker, we have been talking about the Amber bill and adding things to it. We had a bill a week and a half ago on the floor. That was to aid our men and women in the armed forces whom we are sending in harm's way. We were not able to pass it the week before. We have not passed it this week. Can the gentleman advise us as to the status of that bill.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HOYER. I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, the Committee on Ways and Means held a markup of the Social Security bill yesterday, and I expect to consider that legislation under a rule in the next week or so.

On the Armed Services Tax Fairness Act, the committee is still reviewing options for potential changes to that bill, but we also expect to consider that legislation in the very near future.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I advise the distinguished majority leader that I am authorized on behalf of the minority to tell the gentleman that if that bill were reported out without any additional items attached to it, we would be prepared to give unanimous consent so it could be passed either next Tuesday night or Wednesday.

Mr. Speaker, lastly, it is my understanding that we obviously want to accommodate those who want to go to that dinner, but am I correct in observing that the normal practice on Tuesdays will continue to be 6:30?

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HOYER. I yield to the gentleman from Texas.

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, the gentleman is correct. This is a special and rare occurrence where we would not be starting votes on legislation at 6:30 on a day that we come back into session. There are extenuating circumstances, and we are trying to accommodate our Members. Yes, we hope to stick to 6:30 as much as possible.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, reclaiming my time, I thank the gentleman for his comments.

#### ADJOURNMENT TO MONDAY, MARCH 17, 2003

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent when the House adjourns today, it adjourn to meet at noon on Monday, March 17, 2003.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SIMPSON). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

#### HOUR OF MEETING ON TUESDAY, MARCH 18, 2003

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that when the House adjourns on Monday, March 17, that it adjourn to meet at 12:30 p.m. on Tuesday, March 18, 2003, for morning hour debates.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

#### DISPENSING WITH CALENDAR WEDNESDAY BUSINESS ON WEDNESDAY NEXT

Mr. DELAY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the business in order under the Calendar Wednesday rule be dispensed with on Wednesday next.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

#### HONORING KATHLEEN CASEY AND ALL IRISH AMERICANS ON ST. PATRICK'S DAY

(Mr. ROHRABACHER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Madam Speaker, with St. Patrick's Day only a few days away, it is appropriate for us to recognize and, yes, celebrate the role that Irish Americans have played in our history and in the development of our national character.

So many Irish Americans came here seeking refuge from tyranny and hunger in their own homeland. They never forgot that suffering that they left behind, which helped ensure that America has, over the years, sided with the oppressed and cared for the less fortunate.

Irish Americans passed on these values, along with a sense of decency and a commitment to justice, as well as a love of song and humor, from generation to generation. One of those proud Americans of Irish descent is Kathleen Casey of Orange County, California, who turns 80 years old today. We wish her a happy birthday, and will join her and other Irish Americans in the celebration of St. Patrick's Day this coming Monday.

#### NO STRATEGIC PETROLEUM RESERVES TO BE RELEASED

(Mr. DEFAZIO asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DEFAZIO. Madam Speaker, I urge Members to read the Wall Street Journal today wherein the Secretary of Energy, appointed by President Bush, assured Ali Naimi, the Saudi Minister, the man in charge of manipulating oil supply and heading up their negotiations with the cartel to control prices and to constrain supply, he assured him, Mr. Abraham, the Secretary of Energy, assured him the United States would not release oil from its Strategic Petroleum Reserve to help control the prices being gouged out of Americans by the Saudis and others.

That is outrageous. I cannot believe that the Secretary of Energy appointed by President Bush has cut a deal with the Saudis that we will not release our Strategic Petroleum Reserve to help the American consumers, to help keep our airlines from going bankrupt, to help keep our truckers from going bankrupt, and to help keep American families not being able to put food on the table so they can buy a tank of gas for their car. There is something wrong with that. I have sent the Secretary of Energy a letter to ask him to explain his position to the American people.

#### EXPRESSING REGRET FOR ASSASSINATION OF SERBIAN PRIME MINISTER ZORAN DJINDJIC

(Mr. DREIER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. DREIER. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my deep regret at the tragic assassination yesterday of Serbian Prime Minister Zoran Djindjic. Prime Minister Djindjic worked closely with my friend, Jim Denton, and my chief of staff, Brad Smith, in pursuing democratization in Serbia. In a country that has seen more than its share of autocratic governments, the Prime Minister promoted democratic ideals